



**JOINT READINESS TRAINING CENTER
AND FORT POLK
PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE
*Press Release***

7073 RADIO ROAD
FORT POLK LA 71459-5342
Voice: (337) 531-1418
Fax: (337) 531-2403



Release Number: 030304

March 12, 2004

LA HOME FRONT CELEBRATION 2004

Fort Polk, LA- Fort Polk is proud to announce today its cooperative effort with area communities to support an unprecedented home front celebration to honor and recognize all members of the armed forces –Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines and Coast Guard and military families during a one-day public event set for Saturday, June 19, 2004 in downtown historic Leesville. Registration begins today for planned activities.

In unison with some of Fort Polk's closest neighbors, the cities of Leesville, DeRidder, Alexandria, Pineville, Natchitoches, Lake Charles, Many and Ball, the event has been titled "A Louisiana Home Front Celebration" – Servicemembers, Families, and Communities Serving Together with Pride.

"I am proud to have the opportunity to participate in this celebration that will honor all members of our armed services—Soldiers, sailors, airmen and women, and Marines from Active, National Guard and Reserve components assigned to military installations across this great state," said Brig. Gen. Jason K. Kamiya, commander of the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk.

The event starts with a ticker-tape style parade akin to a World War II celebration to honor and recognize service men and women that will involve military marching units and bands. The day's events will continue with celebrity entertainment, hometown community carnival activities and much more.

"I hope that you will join me, in unison with our Fort Polk neighbors, to celebrate the honorable service of our joint military members and their families," said Leesville Mayor Jim Shapkoff Jr. "We will together create an unprecedented community home front celebration that will truly honor our men and women in uniform and all our military families."

Thousands are expected to participate, and community involvement is key to the success of the large-scale event. In partnership with the city of Leesville, statewide registration begins today for community registration for numerous activities.

"The registration is important to insure fullest participation and support to make this the best home front celebration to honor our own," said T.L. Sonny Berry, Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army, and senior community liaison for the event.

"We are committed to all branches of the military, and are excited about demonstrating in a unique way our Southern hospitality in support of a home front celebration that will be fitting and proper. There is nothing we can't do to support our forces and their families," said Berry.

-more-

“The parade, in particular, will give us all an opportunity to highlight the achievements and service of our past, present and future forces from all our services,” he added.

Communities and organizations are encouraged to collectively work together with their nearest municipalities to cooperatively provide support.

Registration forms can be obtained at the Leesville Mayor’s Office and the Fort Polk Public Affairs Office. In addition, event information and all forms will be available on the Fort Polk’s web site on Friday, March 19 at <http://www.jrtc-polk.army.mil>. Registration contact information is provided below:

Registration Contact Information:

Parade:

Joy Cryer
Office of the Mayor
101 West Lee Street
Leesville, LA 71446
Office: 239-2444
Fax: 238-0464
Email: leesvilc@bellsouth.net

Community Carnival Activities:

Paula Schlag
Fort Polk Public Affairs Office
7073 Radio Road
Fort Polk, LA 71459
337-531-2011
Fax: 337-531-6014
Email: schlagp@polk.army.mil

Sponsorship/Entertainment/Food and Drink Vendors:

Shelby Sarver
Directorate of Morale, Welfare and Recreation
7073 Radio Road
Fort Polk, LA 71459
Office: 337-531-1860
Fax: 337-531-2403
Email: shelby.sarver@polk.army.mil

Volunteers:

Tresa Hess
Fort Polk Public Affairs Office
7073 Radio Road
Fort Polk, LA 71459
337-531-4045
Fax: 337-531-6014
Email: tresa.hess@polk.army.m

- end -